United Nations A/AC.109/2000/8

General Assembly

Distr.: General
24 May 2000

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

St. Helena

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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I. General

1. The Territory of St. Helena,[1] which is administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, consists of the island of St. Helena and two dependencies: the island of Ascension and a group of small islands forming the dependency of Tristan da Cunha.

2. Situated in the South Atlantic Ocean, approximately 1,900 kilometres from Angola and 2,900 kilometres from Brazil, St. Helena is a small island of volcanic origin. The Territory comprises a total land area of 412 square kilometres: Ascension lies 1,200 kilometres to the north-west of St. Helena, and Tristan da Cunha and the other small islands are approximately 2,400 kilometres to the south of it. St. Helena, where Jamestown, the capital of the Territory, is located, is the largest island, with an area of 122 square kilometres. The islands enjoy a tropical climate tempered by trade winds that blow throughout the year. They have a distinctive flora and fauna, with many rare or endangered species.

3. The inhabitants of St. Helena, who number approximately 5,000, are known as "Saints" or St. Helenians, and are of mixed origin. Approximately one third reside in Jamestown. English is the only language. The population depends for a living on fish exports and ship maintenance.[2] Access to St. Helena is provided by the *Royal Mail Ship (RMS) St. Helena*, which stops en route between Cardiff and Cape Town. The nearest airstrip is located on Ascension.

II. Historical background

4. St. Helena was discovered by the Portuguese navigator, Juan da Nova, on St. Helena Day, 21 May 1502. It was an uninhabited island. Its existence was kept secret until the English seafarer Thomas Cavendish came upon it in 1588. In 1633, the Netherlands claimed it but did not occupy the island. In 1658, a charter from the Lord Protector of Britain authorized the British East India Company to colonize and fortify the island, which was subsequently settled by the English. Slaves were brought from Africa, Madagascar and the Far East. Chinese and some Indian indentured labourers were brought to work on the island. King George II issued a charter to the East India Company setting out how the island should be fortified and governed. In the charter the King also gave the inhabitants full English citizenship in perpetuity.[3] Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled on St. Helena from 1815 until his death in 1821. St. Helena became a Crown Colony in 1834.

III. Constitutional and political background and developments

5. The St. Helena Constitution Order of 1988, which entered into force on 1 January 1989, replaced the Constitution of St. Helena and dependencies introduced on 1 January 1967. Under the new Constitution, the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, who is appointed by the Queen, administers the Territory. He is assisted by an Executive Council and a Legislative Council.

6. The Legislative Council comprises the Speaker, three ex officio members — the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Attorney General — and 12 elected members. The Executive Council is presided over by the Governor and consists of the ex officio members mentioned above and five of the elected members of the Legislative Council. Although a member of both the Legislative Council and the Executive Council, the Attorney General has no vote in either body.

7. Elections are held by secret ballot at intervals of not more than four years, by universal adult suffrage for those 18 years and older. Two political parties exist nominally, but since 1976 they have been inactive and elections have been held on a non-partisan basis.

8. The judicial system, based on the laws of the United Kingdom, is administered by the Supreme Court (there is a non-resident Chief Justice) and by a Magistrate's Court presided over by the senior of the three magistrates sitting at a session. There is also a Juvenile Court and a Small Debts Court. Provision exists for a Court of Appeal consisting of three judges, which can sit at Jamestown or London.[4]

9. In January 1983, when the British Nationality Act came into force at the end of the Falklands (Malvinas) conflict, St. Helenians had their citizenship rights taken away. Islanders consider that the restoration of full British citizenship to the people of the Territory is a matter of basic human rights. Islanders have had no nationality other than British (see para. 4 above). In order to support the restoration of full rights of

citizenship of those British subjects who are St. Helenian, a Citizenship Commission was set up in 1992 as the Bishop's Commission, by the Anglican Church on St. Helena. The Commission has 13 members on St. Helena and its branch in the United Kingdom has 7 members. Its main activity centres on bringing about public awareness locally, nationally and internationally about matters concerning citizenship and constitutional development of the Territory of St. Helena and its dependencies.

10. In 1994, the Legislative Council requested a review of the Constitution to include provisions for a Bill of Rights. The administering Power noted the statements made regarding the Constitution and was prepared to discuss it with the people of St. Helena. It also noted that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association had sent a delegation in 1996 to study the Constitution.[5]

11. Discussions and debates in the House of Commons in January 1997 covered the question of citizenship and rising unemployment (18 per cent in 1996). Emphasis was placed on encouraging the Territory towards self-sufficiency, local control and self-government.[6] Unemployment was the reported cause of various tensions on the island in April 1997, which led to the resignation of some legislators and a call for new elections in November 1997. More detailed information about political developments in and regarding St. Helena are covered in previous reports (A/AC.109/2071, paras. 5-8, and A/AC.109/2115, paras. 4-8).

12. As reported previously (A/AC.109/2115, paras. 4-8) in November 1997 members of the island's Legislative Council visited London to lobby for local investment, greater governmental financial support and, primarily, for the guarantee of full citizenship rights. In February 1998, Councillors from St. Helena renewed their appeals for the rights to settle and work in the United Kingdom.

13. On 17 March 1999, the Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, Robin Cook, submitted in the British House of Commons a White Paper entitled "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories". The White Paper enumerated the changes in the status of the United Kingdom's Dependent Territories, including the territory of St. Helena and its dependencies. The title of the Territories was changed from "British Dependent Territories" to "British Overseas Territories" to reflect the United Kingdom Government's stated goal of partnership with those peoples.[7]

14. The stipulations in the White Paper of greatest relevance to St. Helena are: an offer of British citizenship, and with it, the right of abode in the United Kingdom to those that choose to accept it; a commitment to continuing financial assistance to those Territories, including St. Helena, that remain economically dependent on British aid; and the creation of an Overseas Territories Minister and a Council of the Overseas Territories, both having responsibility for the needs of the Territories. The Council would include the Chief Ministers of each Overseas Territory and would convene annually.

15. Following the publication of the United Kingdom Government's White Paper, ,the Government of St. Helena stated that it assumed that citizenship would be restored to St. Helenians during the next three-year aid agreement with the United Kingdom.[8]

16. The Citizenship Commission and the elected members of the Legislative Council discussed the White Paper and presented their findings to the Government of the United Kingdom in June 1999. As of the end of 1999, no response had been received.[9]

17. The first meeting of the United Kingdom Overseas Territories Consultative Council was held on 19 and 20 October1999. Discussions centred on the three main themes of the relationship between the United Kingdom and Overseas Territories; the Overseas Territories in a changing world; and sustainable development and the environment.

IV. Economic conditions

A. General

18. In "The St. Helena Strategic Review 2000-2010", issued by the Government of St. Helena in September 1999, the Government pointed out that a key difficulty in assessing the state of the economy remained the lack of up-to-date and accurate economic indicators.

19. According to appendix one of the above-mentioned White Paper, annual gross domestic product (GDP) per capita on St. Helena for 1998 was 2,536 pounds sterling; government revenue and expenditure

for 1997/98 were each £10.3 million; United Kingdom exports for 1998 were valued at £6.99 million and United Kingdom imports for the same period stood at £.65 million.

20. St. Helena possesses few natural resources. Agriculture, largely of a subsistence nature, is the main economic activity. As food production is insufficient to supply the island's needs and there is a lack of manufacturing industries, the vast majority of the island's requirements must be imported. St. Helena's economy is aid-dependent, relying on resources from the United Kingdom for approximately 26 per cent of its 1997-1998 public-sector recurrent budget. Development aid represented another 18 per cent of its budget. Virtually all its capital investment and the majority of the technical cooperation it receives is funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (formerly the Overseas Development Administration), the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The cost of living in St. Helena is higher than in the United Kingdom, owing to costs related to the remoteness of the island. The retail price index in February 1999 was 111.82 (base year November 1994 = 1000, compared with 109.62 in February 1998).

21. The St. Helena Government's Strategic Review 2000-2010 outlines the options for St. Helena to generate sustainable wealth under the following categories: internal investment; tourism; exports; and import substitution. With the exception of the last, all are heavily dependent on significantly improved access. It is the Government's view that the shipping schedule currently in place fails to deliver the type of access that the island needs. This means that without a fundamental change in access, St. Helena will continue to be an aid-dependent territory for the foreseeable future and the level of aid required will have to increase yearly just to maintain the current level of services. There will also be a greater dependence on expatriate staff to deliver services that are currently provided principally by St. Helenians.

22. In 1995, the St. Helena Government embarked on a programme of structural adjustment, based on both public sector reform and private sector development. At that time, the public sector employed 68 per cent of the working population and unemployment was 11.4 per cent. In 1999, public service accounted for some 45 per cent of the working population and unemployment among the resident population totalled about 15 per cent, with the underlying trend showing a decrease.[10]

23. As a result of the dependence on imports, the paucity of exports and a small internal market, there are limited employment opportunities on St. Helena. Offshore employment, mainly in Ascension and the Falklands (Malvinas), has grown rapidly over the last decade, increasing from 20 per cent to over 30 per cent of the total workforce, and now stands at its highest ever level, some 1,300, of a total workforce of 3,700. The restoration of British citizenship may see a further increase in the numbers seeking work in the United Kingdom. There is a concern, in the longer term, about sustaining services and infrastructure.

B. United Kingdom development assistance

24. The strategic review undertaken by the St. Helena Government in 1996 formed the basis of a three-year Country Policy Plan agreed to in 1997, which committed the Government of the United Kingdom to provide a package of development assistance totalling some US$ 26 million over the period from 1997/98 to 1999/00. The second annual review of the Plan was conducted in December 1998.

25. The development assistance agreed under the Country Policy Plan comprises direct budgetary aid for St. Helena (approximately £3.2 million per year), an annual subsidy for the operation of the *RMS St. Helena* (approximately £1.3 million) and support for bilateral development assistance, including provision of some 24 longer-term personnel in key posts and some short-term experts; awards for training in the United Kingdom; and a number of infrastructure development projects (roads rehabilitation and improvement, cargo handling, etc.). No further information is available on future development assistance.[11]

C. Development projects

26. The UNDP 1997-1999 country cooperation framework for St. Helena has been extended through 2000. Following a careful analysis of St. Helena's current and emerging national priorities, UNDP thematic areas of sustainable human development, and the assistance currently being provided from other sources, a strategy was formulated for UNDP's

cooperation with the Government of St. Helena which would focus on employment and sustainable livelihoods. Given the Territory's efforts to increase the role of its private sector and to mitigate unemployment, it was agreed that the emphasis would be on activities in private sector development, particularly on enterprises linked to tourism. Within this development context, the following projects are currently being implemented:

- **Tourism**: providing technical and other assistance in the implementation of development and marketing proposals in the Tourism Master Plan for the island;
- **In support of sustainable livelihoods**: assisting the Government of St. Helena by strengthening its capacity to plan and implement development projects for the purpose of promoting long-term sustainable human development, by providing technical support, training office staff and producing the island's first "National Human Development Report";
- **Tourism sector employment and private sector development**: stimulating the private sector through the development of the tourism industry through vocational training projects and improving the island's tourism product.[12]

D. Agriculture, land tenure and livestock

27. During 1998/99, 214.8 cubic metres of timber was sold and 1,098 kilograms of coffee was exported to the United Kingdom. (Figures for 1999/00 were not available at the time of writing.)

28. The Agriculture and Forestry Department provides support to smallholder producers, including agricultural loans, through a revolving credit fund, which provided loans totalling £23,209 in 1998/99.

29. In 1992, an agricultural water subsidy programme was introduced to reduce the impact on farmers of a considerable increase in the prices charged by the Government. During 1998/99, £8,508 was spent on water subsidy, representing about 38,045 cubic metres of water used for irrigation.

30. The number of department employees involved in agricultural and livestock services totalled 43, and estimated expenditure during 1998/99 was £922,810.

E. Environment

31. St. Helena has an environmental conservation programme aimed at preserving endangered species and diversity of habitats. The plants that are unique to St. Helena form an important part of the Territory's heritage and could potentially increase tourism for the island. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) lists as endangered 40 per cent of the island's plants, while other conservationists insist that the actual proportion is higher still. Concerted efforts are being made to ensure their survival and conservation.[13] From 1 April 1998 to 31 March 1999, some 7,286 varying species of endemic plants were sown on the island.

F. Fisheries

32. Employees at the St. Helena Fisheries Corporation during 1999 consisted of 18 workers, excluding fishermen.

33. Fishing licences for waters around Ascension yield about £1 million for the St. Helena economy and a Falklands (Malvinas) company is setting up a fish freezing facility on St. Helena.[10]

G. Industries

34. There is no large-scale industry on St. Helena. All crafts are practised on a cottage industry basis, with technical, financial and marketing facilities provided by the Government through the St. Helena Development Agency, established in 1995. In the financial year 1998/99, the Agency approved loans totalling £107,575 and grants amounting to £6,160. This financial assistance is focused on industries identified as having the greatest potential for development, namely, fishing, agriculture, tourism, exports and import substitution. (Figures for 1999/00 were not available at the time of writing.)

H. Transport, communications and utilities

35. There is no airport or airstrip on St. Helena, and no railway. The only port is Jamestown, which provides good anchorage for ships of all sizes. The island's main link with the outside world continues to be the *RMS St. Helena*, which is owned and chartered

by the St. Helena Shipping Company, Ltd., and which plies between Avonmouth in the United Kingdom and Cape Town in South Africa, calling at the Cape Verde islands and Ascension. The service receives an annual subsidy from the United Kingdom.[14]

36. The Foreign Office of the administering Power is currently conducting an investigation into transport links to the island, including an examination of the benefits of having its own airport. Talks are currently under way between the Foreign Office and the United States of America with regard to allowing civilian commercial flights to use Ascension island airstrip[15] and to examining the possibility of increasing the frequency of shipping to the island. Problems with the current limited access were highlighted when the *RMS St. Helena* broke down shortly before Christmas 1999, causing some panic buying and concern on the island, since all supplies arrive by sea.[16]

37. The island has over 100 kilometres of surfaced roads, to which 1.5 kilometres were added in 1998/99.

38. Electricity, water and roads are provided by the Public Works and Services Department, which employs approximately 273 workers. The Department's annual expenditure is £1.8 million; and it receives income from the sale of power, water and services, totalling £1.2 million.

I. Banking and credit

39. The only bank is the Government Savings Bank, which does not offer the full range of normal commercial banking facilities. Limited credit facilities for house-building and home improvements are made available on very easy terms through the Government Housing Loans Board and the Government Savings Bank.

40. All financial transactions are ultimately channelled through London, and United Kingdom bank rates apply. No exchange controls operate on the island and, to the extent that overseas transactions are channelled through London, United Kingdom control measures apply. The deficit in the island's trading operations is in effect made up through the grant-in-aid from the United Kingdom Treasury.[17]

41. The value of local currency in circulation as at 31 March 1999 was £2,975,610, of which £2,553,970 was in notes and £421,640 in coins. No additional information for the year under review has been received by the Secretariat.

J. International trade

42. St. Helena's main imports are food products and tobacco, motor spirits and fuel oil, animal feed, building materials, motor vehicles, machinery and spare parts. Its only exports are fish (including what is said to be the world's first organically registered wild fish),[18] handicrafts and coffee. Its main trading partners remain the United Kingdom and South Africa. Other partners include Brazil and Ascension.

V. Social conditions

A. General

43. The most accurate assessment of the state of the economy is derived from the 1998 population census.[19] Some key comparisons with the previous census (1987) are set out below; all these indicators show a steady improvement in the island's standard of living:

- 856 households own their property outright, up from 699;
- 403 households are in the process of buying their property, compared to 341;
- 4 per cent of the population are without inside piped water, compared with 15 per cent at the previous census;
- Over a quarter of the population did not have access to a flush toilet in 1987, down to under 4 per cent in the current census;
- 19 per cent of the population had no access to a bathroom; this figure has fallen to 3 per cent and public money has been made available to reduce the figure still further;
- Over 20 per cent of the population did not use electricity, as compared with 5 per cent at present, while the number using wood for cooking has declined from 62 to 43 per cent;
- The number of cars owned by households has increased from 776 to 998; 68 per cent of households have access to a TV, compared with 29 per cent earlier; and over 83 per cent have

access to a refrigerator or freezer, compared with 67 per cent earlier.

B. Employment

44. As some 20 per cent of the population at any one time is working offshore (mainly on Ascension and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)), there is considerable dislocation of families, as virtually all contracts are for unaccompanied workers. Slightly more than 100 offshore workers have left children in care on St. Helena. Of that number, 67 per cent are looked after by grandparents and 33 per cent are in the care of other relatives or friends.[19]

45. Wages remitted to St. Helena by offshore workers have enabled many families to improve their standard of living.[20] Given the scale of unemployment and offshore employment, only 55 per cent of the St. Helenian workforce is actually in employment on St. Helena.[19]

46. At the end of March 1999, 498 needy people were receiving income-related benefits, at weekly rates varying from £18.95 to £45. In addition, unemployment allowance was paid to 256 people, at rates varying from £12.80 to £40 per week.

C. Public health

47. According to the administering Power, recurrent public health expenditure in 1998/99 was £1,695,190, which is 16.9 per cent of the total government recurrent expenditure. There is one general hospital in Jamestown and six rural health clinics on the island. The problems of St. Helena's isolation and the limited health-care facilities on the island were highlighted over the last year with patients having to travel up to five days to receive the required medical treatment in South Africa and the United Kingdom.[21]

D. Education

48. There are 12 public schools in the Territory. In 1999, there were 123 teachers, of whom 119 worked full-time and 4 part-time. Total expenditure by the Education Department in 1998/99 is estimated at £1,282,540 which is approximately 9.4 per cent of the total government recurrent expenditure.

49. The introduction of British standardized tests in English and mathematics in the first and middle sections of school have shown that the majority of pupils score lower than their British counterparts. Results from the secondary school examination for students 16 years of age and over show that these pupils are also seriously underachieving, with less than 12 per cent each year attaining the minimum five qualifying grades for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or equivalent, compared with 40 per cent in the United Kingdom. These problems have been attributed in part to the high level of staff turnover and their lack of qualifications and experience.[19]

VI. Dependencies of St. Helena

A. Tristan da Cunha

1. General

50. Tristan da Cunha is a small island of volcanic origin in the South Atlantic, midway between South America and South Africa. It is almost circular in shape and has an area of 98 square kilometres. Its capital is Edinburgh of the Seven Seas. The neighbouring islands of Gough, Inaccessible and Nightingale make up the Tristan da Cunha Group. Excluding expatriates, there were 297 islanders resident on Tristan da Cunha as of December 1998.

2. Constitutional and political status

51. Executive authority for Tristan da Cunha is exercised by the Governor of St. Helena. A resident Administrator is appointed by the Governor and is responsible to him. The Administrator is advised by an Island Council, led by the Chief Islander and comprising eight elected members (including at least one woman) and three appointed members. Elections are held every three years. All registered voters over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. The last election was held on 23 October 1997.[22]

52. Tristan da Cunha has its own legislation, but St. Helena law applies to the extent that it is not inconsistent with local law, in so far as it is suitable for local circumstances and subject to such modifications as local circumstances make necessary. There is one full-time police officer and three special constables. The Administrator is the Magistrate.[23]

53. Dependency residents will receive the options of British citizenship and residency after parliamentary passage of the resolutions contained in the White Paper entitled "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories" (see para. 13).

3. Environment

54. A team of South African meteorologists live on Gough. Inaccessible and Nightingale are uninhabited. The islands have a very distinctive endemic flora and fauna and are important breeding grounds for many seabirds. Gough Island is a World Heritage Site. The volcano is still active and last erupted in October 1961. The population was evacuated to the United Kingdom but returned in 1963.

4. Economic conditions

55. According to the administering Power,[23] Tristan da Cunha has been largely self-sufficient. The economy relies predominantly on the income from crayfish, the primary source of employment, and returns on investments. The sale of postage stamps and other philatelic items, which are much sought after by collectors, is the island's next most important source of income.[24]

56. There are no air services to Tristan da Cunha. Transport to and from the island is provided by the yearly call of the *RMS St. Helena*, the occasional passenger ship, two crayfish concession vessels and the South African research vessel *SA Agulhas*. Owing to rough seas the harbour is accessible only for 60 to 70 days a year. Improvements to the harbour are vital to Tristan da Cunha's future.

57. The main market for crayfish is the Pacific East and the downturn in the economy there has reduced the demand. This means that in 1999 the local economy will run a substantial deficit. Other sources of income — a limited tourist industry based on three or four ship visits per year and the sale of postage stamps — cannot realistically be increased significantly. Tourism offers limited potential for economic development. Other potential sources, such as the sale of mineral water, will require considerable capital investment.[23]

58. The pound sterling is the official currency. Government revenue for 1998 was £744,534 and expenditure was £618,839. The standard of living has shown significant improvement in recent years, evidenced by high receipts at the island store, the main shopping facility.

5. Social conditions

59. With a population of 297 (1998) and a negligible unemployment rate, Tristan da Cunha's standard of living has shown an improvement in recent years. There is full employment for males and work is available for most women. The Government and the fishing company grant wage increases based on the cost-of-living index calculated twice annually from the data submitted to the Statistics Division of the Overseas Development Administration in London. Pensions are paid to all persons over 65 years of age.

60. Medical care is provided free of charge by the Government. The island's only hospital is staffed by a qualified expatriate medical officer and four nurses. When required, medical treatment is provided overseas.

61. Education is free and compulsory for all children between 5 and 15 years of age. Working men and women are encouraged to continue their education under a "day-release" programme.[25]

6. Assistance from the United Kingdom

62. Bilateral assistance to Tristan da Cunha is modest and consists of support for the provision of medical care on the island and continuing support for the Fisheries Management Project.[23]

B. Ascension

1. General

63. Ascension was discovered by the Portuguese in 1501 and "found" again on Ascension Day in 1503 by Alphonse d'Albuquerque, who named the island. In 1815, when Napoleon was a prisoner on St. Helena, a small British naval garrison was stationed on Ascension. The island remained under Admiralty supervision until 1922 when it was made a dependency of St. Helena.

64. During the Second World War, the United States Government built the Wideawake airstrip on the Island. In 1957 a United States Air Force presence was re-established and the airstrip and ancillary facilities were enlarged. It is now an Intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and space missile tracking station. In

1982, it became the intermediate stop for Royal Air Force flights to and from the Falklands (Malvinas).

65. Ascension covers an area of 90 square kilometres and is of volcanic origin. The last eruption was about 600 years ago. There is no indigenous population. Total population is 1,100.[23]

2. Constitutional and political status

66. Executive authority for the Territory is exercised by the Governor of St. Helena. A resident Administrator is responsible to the Governor. The "user" organizations on Ascension (see para. 69) and the Island Customer Board oversee the management of the island's public and common services. The Administrator is advised on an informal basis by a "Forum" of employees, most of whom are St. Helenians.[23]

67. Consideration is being given by the administering Power to allowing greater democracy on Ascension, as indicated in the consultation paper entitled "*Ascension Island: into the new millennium*", published in April 1999. It is assumed that under the next three-year aid agreement with the United Kingdom there will be no substantive change on Ascension in this direction. However, it is also assumed that during the same period Ascension will gain greater financial independence.[19]

68. Ascension Island's own legislation is of a limited range. However, English law applies to the extent that it is not inconsistent with local law, in so far as it is suitable for local circumstances and subject to such modifications as local circumstance make necessary.[23]

3. Economic and social conditions

69. Ascension's major source of revenue is from the sale of postage stamps. The island is also of considerable scientific interest as it is a breeding site for the green turtle and various species of seabirds. Cost of government, net of revenue in 1998/99 was £1,863,720. Ascension receives no aid from the United Kingdom.

70. Ascension is an important communications centre. The island is used by Cable and Wireless, the BBC and the Composite Signals Organisation. These "user" organizations, together with the Royal Air Force, finance non-military activities on the island. Negotiations are presently under way with the United States authorities with regard to opening up Wideawake airport to civilian commercial flights. Further details are provided in a previous working paper (A/AC.109/1071, paras 119-129).

71. A small unit of the St. Helena Police Force has been seconded to Ascension. The Administrator is Chief Magistrate and six Justices of the Peace have been appointed.[23]

VII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the administering Power

72. The White Paper entitled "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity" (see para. 13) proposes the granting of the option of British citizenship and the right of abode in the United Kingdom for island residents, as well as a renewed commitment to assisting St. Helena's economic development. The objectives in providing development assistance are stated in the paper as follows:

- "To maximize economic growth and self-sufficiency through sensible economic and financial management, leading to graduation from such support where this objective is feasible;
- "To ensure in the meantime that basic needs are met, including the provision of essential infrastructure;
- "To support the good governance of the Territories, including the proper management of contingent liabilities and the fulfilment of the United Kingdom's international obligations, particularly human rights and the multilateral environment obligations."

73. The representative of the United Kingdom, in addressing the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on 6 October 1999, said that her Government had made further progress in its efforts to transform its relationship with its overseas Territories into a fully modern partnership. This was based on four fundamental principles: self-determination; mutual obligations; freedom for the Territories to run their affairs to the greatest degree possible; and a firm commitment from the United Kingdom to help the Territories economically and to assist them in emergencies. Among the measures being taken was the decision to offer British citizenship and the right of

abode to those people of the overseas Territories who did not already enjoy it, thus meeting a long-standing request of the peoples of the Territories.[26]

B. Position of the Territory

74. The Government of St. Helena published "The St. Helena Strategic Review 2000-2010" in September 1999, in which it outlined its medium-term and long-term vision for St. Helena. In the document the Government states that its aims, though ambitious, are realistic and must be achieved if St. Helena is to become a sustainable economic entity. Further, the restoration of British citizenship is of key importance.

75. In its review, the Government points out that St. Helena remains heavily dependent on aid from the United Kingdom to retain its current standard of living. Noting the objectives of the United Kingdom (see para. 72 above) the strategic review is based on assisting the United Kingdom in achieving those objectives with regard to St. Helena. However, the review concludes that "without radically improved access there is no future for St. Helena"; what is meant here is air access. The St. Helena Government recognizes that air access offers the island its last opportunity to break out of its aid dependency and to achieve its vision. It hopes that Her Majesty's Government realizes this as well and that it will fund an airport on St. Helena.

VIII. Action taken by the General Assembly

76. On 6 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 54/90 B, a consolidated resolution on the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Referring to St. Helena specifically in section IX of the resolution, the Assembly noted that the administering Power was prepared to discuss further with the people of St. Helena the statements made by members of the Legislative Council about the Constitution, and requested the administering Power to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people of the Territory regarding their future political status. The Assembly also requested the administering Power and relevant regional and international organizations to continue to support the efforts of the territorial Government to address the socio-economic development of the Territory.

Notes

[1] Information regarding St. Helena has been derived from a report transmitted to the Secretary-General by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations, on 11 May 1999.

[2] *The Guardian*, 23 October 1999.

[3] Official information derived from "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories", White Paper submitted to the House of Commons on March 17, 1999 by the Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom and set out in document A/AC.109/1999/1, annex; and from "St. Helena's History", compiled by Basil George.

[4] See A/AC.109/2021, paras. 4-7; 2 May 1995.

[5] A/AC.109/2071, para. 4.

[6] A/AC.109/2071, para. 5.

[7] Information in paras. 5-6 derived from "Partnership for Progress ... " (see note 3 above).

[8] The St. Helena Strategic Review 2000-2010, St. Helena Government, September 1999.

[9] Statement by Basil George, Chairman of the Citizenship Commission on St. Helena.

[10] "Partnership for Progress ... " (see note 3), appendix one.

[11] "Progress and Prosperity ... "

[12] Note from UNDP dated 3 April 2000 on "Briefing on the Saint Helena Country Programme 1997-2000".

[13] "St. Helena Ecology is World's Most Endangered", *Reuters*, 1 March 1999.

[14] A/AC.109/2021, para. 35.

[15] "Is this the last resort for intrepid tourist?", *The Guardian*, 12 October 1999.

[16] "Christmas finally coming to remote St. Helena", *Reuters*, 30 November 1999.

[17] A/AC.109/2021, paras. 38-39.

[18] *The Independent*, 21 September 1999.

[19] The St. Helena Strategic Review 2000-2010, St. Helena Government, September 1999.

[20] A/AC.109/2021, para. 41.

[21] *Agence France-Presse*, 27 October 1999, and *St. Helena News*, 17 September 1999.

[22] A/AC.109/2043, paras. 32-33, and "Partnership for Progress ...", appendix one.

[23] "Partnership for Progress ... ", appendix one.

[24] A/AC.109/2043, paras. 34-36.

[25] A/AC.109/2043, paras. 37-39.

[26] A/C.4/54/SR.5, paras. 91-92.